

Adm 13.1 MF

HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.

STAT

December 11, 1972

The Editor
Washington Star News
225 Virginia Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D. C. 20003

Dear Sir,

In order to set the record straight, I should like to correct a statement made by Oswald Johnston on December 4th in his article on Helms' exit from CIA. In this he stated that Helms' assessment of the Soviet SS-9 threat appears in retrospect to have been wrong. Actually, Helms' assessment has been confirmed. Since the summer of 1969, the Soviets only initiated construction on less than 38 SS-9 or other large ICBMs. No new starts have taken place in the last year and they are now limited to a total of 318 by the Interim Agreement signed in Moscow. This very small program is to be compared with Secretary Laird's estimate of an increase of 50 - 60 per year and a predicted total of 450 by 1974. Secretary Laird was wrong and CIA Director Helms was right.

Sincerely,

STAT

Herbert Scoville, Jr.
McLean, Virginia

STAT

HS: ☐
cc: Mr. Carl Duckett